DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 383 373 JC 950 297

AUTHOR	Dixon, Mary; Avera, Marinda
TITLE	21st Century Workplace Requires Re-Engineering Our Educational System To Facilitate the Individual Student's Mastery of Behavioral Skills.
INSTITUTION	Sandhills Community Coll., Pinehurst, NC.
PUB DATE	Jun 95
NOTE	9p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Business Administration Education; Career Choice; *College Outcomes Assessment; Community Colleges; Computer Software; Curriculum Based Assessment; Educational Certificates; *Education Work Relationship; *Interpersonal Competence; Job Skills; Readiness; Two Year Colleges; Vocational Education; *Vocational Evaluation; *Work Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	Sandhills Community College NC

ABSTRACT

Sandhills Community College (SCC), in North Carolina, provides a guarantee to employers that graduates will be proficient in the areas of knowledge and skills covered by their educational programs. If an employer finds a Sandhills graduate deficient, the graduate can re-enroll in up to three courses at the college at no cost to the employer or employee. SCC undertook a 2-year work-readiness pilot project to add skills standards and certification to its Business Administration curriculum and sought to implement methods to measure outcomes for students' behavioral skills. In the program students complete a Job-Readiness Assessment Portfolio, in addition to program requirements, and are awarded a "certificate of readiness for employment" upon completion. For the pilot, several tools from the marketplace were integrated into the Business Administration program, including: (1) the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which helps students understand the inter-relatedness of personality type and career choice; (2) a Zenger Miller workshop, providing experiential learning experiences to help students master workplace interpersonal skills; (3) the Workplace Success Skills assessment test to measure students' work preparedness; and (4) Career Design, a software program which helps determine student areas of interest and allows each student to develop a personalized portfolio in a business speciality area. The pilot has successfully implemented measurement tools to assess students behavioral skills and meets state and federal requirements for school-based education. (KP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 383 373

21st Century Workplace Requires Re-Engineering Our Educational System to Facilitate the Individual Student's Mastery of Behavioral Skills.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Mary Dixon
Marinda Avera
Sandhills Community College
Pinehurst, NC

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
M. Avera
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

JC 950 247

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

21ST CENTURY WORKPLACE REQUIRES RE-ENGINEERING OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TO FACILITATE THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT'S MASTERY OF BEHAVIORAL SKILLS

Mary Dixon and Marinda Avera, Professors
Department of Business and Economics
Sandhills Community College, Pinehurst, NC

All across America business leaders are complaining that the workforce lacks motivation, education, and job skills. Causes of the "skills gap" include new technologies and workplace reorganization that require flexibility and initiative. The private-sector Commission on the Skills of American Workforce reports that employers are more concerned about work habits or "work maturity" than technical skills. Such findings reflect the increasingly intangible nature of the talents required in the workplace. These new behavioral skills are needed by the U.S. employee to become a high-wage earner in the workplace of the 21st Century.

Sandhills Community College Guarantee To Employers

Sandhills Community College guarantees that its graduates are proficient in the areas of knowledge and skill covered by their educational programs. In the event that an employer finds a Sandhills graduate deficient in such an area, the employer should--within 90 days of the graduate's employment--contact the Career Planning and Job Placement Center at the college. The Career Planning and Job Placement Center will arrange to re-enroll the graduate in one, two or three courses at the college--at no charge to the graduate or the employer. This guarantee applies to graduates of two-year degree programs and one-year diploma programs.

Sandhills Community College (SCC) could add an innovative skills standard and certification to its Business Administration curriculum that achieves successful measurement and outcome of behavioral skills. This component could take SCC to a new level of unique, innovative curriculum development that business/industry has indicated is a missing link in the school-to-work transition.

JOB READINESS CERTIFICATION - a proposal at this time.

SCC offers students the opportunity and the responsibility to become Job Ready by completing a Job Ready Assessment Portfolio in addition to meeting program requirements--a more interactive approach to learning. Job Readiness ensures that the student meets the skills requirements employers are seeking.

In taking advantage of this opportunity, students accept the responsibility to work within the SCC system, inside and outside the classroom. For example, students may access career information by completing a business/industry research project as part of a course requirement, by participating in mock interviews via computer in the Writing Center, by evaluating work-related skills and competencies in the Career Assessment Center, by attending a campus-wide Business/Industry Forum, and, ultimately, by training in specific skills areas noted as deficient by an objective assessment in specific curriculum courses.

Upon completion of program and certification requirements, students will be awarded a Job Readiness Certificate denoting proficiency in specific skills and competencies required of workers in the 21st Century. At commencement, graduates will wear a unique tassel symbolizing certification, and their degrees will bear a special seal.

How can this certification benefit an SCC graduate? Certification can offer value recognition--special recognition on a student's resume and degree. Prospective employers become aware of the student's willingness to do more than was required by the system to earn a degree, as well as the knowledge of job success skills the student brings to the workplace.

During the two-year work readiness pilot, we were able to integrate several tools in the marketplace into our Business Administration program. These tools include: Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), Zenger Miller Training Modules, Workplace Success Skills (WSS), and Career Design. We believe these tools integrated into the abstract and experiential learning experiences within the SCC system can be instrumental to the certification of the behavioral skills of our students. Also instrumental is the certification of facilitation of the educator of each of these tools so that there is full participation by the educator and the student in the process.

MYERS BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR

The Myers-Briggs literature is introduced in the introductory course in our program. The test is administered to each student and a detailed description is presented in the classroom experience. Students are given an extended written description of their Myers-Briggs type to include in their career search plan portfolio. The MBTI helps students understand the interrelatedness of personality type and career choice. It provides an opportunity for student self-evaluation. MBTI provides a useful measure of personality temperament. We believe the concept of front loading is important.

The Myers-Briggs literature is introduced during the second year program Fall Quarter in Business Communications. Here communication styles of type is the topic.

The Myers-Briggs literature is introduced during the second year program Winter Quarter. This time the emphasis is on the MBTI Management Styles Diagram, where students further their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses that each management style brings to the workplace. It includes information about and identifies four possible management styles. It smooths the transition from student to professional by providing a framework whereby the student uses MBTI knowledge to understand both self and others; it gives the student focus, direction, and awareness in a work-related team environment; and it creates in the student an awareness of diversity in the workplace, a diversity that includes differing personalities.

The Myers-Briggs literature is introduced again during the second year program Spring Quarter. Students are grouped to explore personality types in different ways for different purposes. For example, in learning type characteristics, like types are grouped by overall preferences and sometimes management temperaments. For decision making and skills practices, different types are grouped to enhance creativity and to enable students to recognize and experience the challenges of dealing with another dimension of diversity. Students especially enjoyed the MBTI component.

We believe this component is an excellent way to begin to build the infrastructure of awareness and that it might be the first puzzle piece necessary to understand all the other diversities in the workplace fully to promote team effectiveness. The key to success requires the integration of MBTI from the introduction of basic information to an advanced mastery level of understanding of the types.

> **For the pilot and later implementation, we attended a MBTI Qualifying Workshop (Spring, 1995) to enable us to implement the MBTI in our curriculum over the two-year program. We feel it is key that we challenge ourselves to grow our awareness of tools available in the marketplace that enhance our curriculum program. The strength of the experience is heightened for the student when the educator is a part of the process advocated to the student to grow the skills and competencies necessary for the workplace.**
>
> **Awareness of preferred learning styles enables educators to maximize the educational experience. Until we truly recognize the individual needs of students in terms of their learning styles, students will never optimally benefit from their educational experiences.**

ZENGER MILLER COMPONENT

Sandhills Community College is one of several colleges in the nation chosen as a pilot site for a project to work in partnership with Zenger Miller to adapt the training programs to the classroom. (Winter and Spring Quarters, 1994-95.) The project was folded into the college's current and unique Work Readiness pilot just completing its second year in the Business and Economics Department. The Zenger Miller modules offer an experiential learning experience that enables our students to master workplace skills and competencies, particularly the interpersonal skills and personal qualities sought by employers. These modules add another dimension to the mastery of behavioral skills and to business/industry outreach. As students go into the workplace and change jobs, or their jobs change, they can come back to SCC and choose modules to learn particular skills or competencies.

We attended the Zenger Miller Facilitation Certification Workshop (Summer, 1994) to be certified for the pilot with Zenger Miller.

Zenger Miller Pilot

Classroom Experience I
Modules from Working and Frontline were included:

Working--builds practical and fundamental skills that improve interpersonal skills employees need to implement an organization's existing quality process.
Frontline Leadership--addresses the multi-faceted role of supervisors and middle managers in today's "do more with less" work environment. It equips them with basic supervisory coaching skills and the fundamentals of leadership behavior.

Business Administration and Accounting majors enrolled in Principles of Management, Bus 235, were introduced to the Basic Principles for Frontline of the Zenger Miller training program. Basic Principles for Frontline introduced the students to Zenger Miller. Using an overhead projector instead of flip charts and three 50-minute class sessions instead of one four-hour presentation, the initial introduction laid the infrastructure for an innovative experiential classroom experience.

Students rolled their eyes when they first learned that they were a part of a pilot to bring experiential learning into the classroom. These students were a mix of waitresses, homemakers, bank teller, clerical secretary, sewing operator, manufacturing line operators, administrative secretary, grocery clerk, food/beverage manager, food/beverage line operator, exercise instructor, and unemployed. They were a representative socioeconomic group typical of a community college classroom.

After the second module was introduced, the facial expressions of these students softened. They began to openly communicate, and most importantly, to accept responsibility to grow their behavioral skills. The magic was that the student could see the results of even the slightest behavioral change. These second-year students had become a collective group as a result of shared experiences in many courses. They could actually see behaviors changing their effectiveness at school, work, and home. They were sold on Zenger Miller. They would never be the same again.

From Constance McNeil, a food and beverage server at the Pinehurst Hotel:

"I must admit I had some doubts about taking this course. I thank Mrs. Dixon for convincing me to take it in the classroom instead of a telecourse. I feel as though the Zenger Miller modules helped take all of us to another level. If I want to be successful, I will have to focus on what I have learned. I thank you, Mrs. Dixon, for bringing this to us, and a special thanks to Zenger Miller for choosing our college. We will never be the same."

A quantitative evaluation tool was used to measure the degree of behavioral change before and after Zenger Miller. The point spread averaged 2 and 3 points on a 6-point scale. Individual behavioral changes averaged as many as a 6-point spread.

Classroom Experience II
Modules from Team Effectiveness were included:

Team Effectiveness–helps team members master the special skills of a team environment such as how to improve interaction within a work group, meet performance goals, handle more decisions, and work with employees outside the team. Participants obtain the tools needed to become skillful team players.

Again, a quantitative evaluation tool was used to measure the degree of behavioral change before and after Zenger Miller. Again, the point spread averaged 2 and 3 points on a 6-point scale. And again, there were individual behavioral changes that averaged as many as a 6-point spread.

WSS was administered to this group at the end of the quarter. Several of these students had been with us for the two-year pilot and had taken the WSS earlier. The WSS, a tool created in the marketplace, provides a measurement of work maturity that employers are concerned about.

WORK SUCCESS SKILLS COMPONENT

As part of America 2000, the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) was created to determine skills and competencies required of the worker of the 21st Century. Sandhills Community College is the only community college in North Carolina to pilot an industry-validated SCANS-based work readiness evaluation tool being created by Electronic Selections System (Spring, 1994).

Workplace Success Skills (WSS) assesses students' work preparedness in terms of their SCANS-related skills. It enables advisors to counsel students to enroll in courses and experiences that provide the skills employers increasingly seek; it helps graduating students assess their job-readiness. WSS is a research-validated resource that can certify the SCANS-based, work readiness of our graduates;
WSS produces a multi-page 'transcript' that documents an individual's capabilities in critical, high performance work areas.

WSS Pilot

SCC piloted the WSS in the Spring of 1994. We assessed 63 students from three areas: curriculum, HRD, and JTPA. Within four and a half hours (8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.), tests were administered to the 37 curriculum students, responses keyed in, results faxed to Electronic Selection Systems Corporation (ESS) and a report on each student was faxed back to Sandhills. **This immediate feedback to students has significant value.**

Each participant's WSS report measured skills on a 10-point scale, including an assessment of each skill and competency, strengths and weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement. **Students surveyed indicated that the reports were on target.**

When we compared the GPA of Work Readiness pilot participants with WSS scores, a positive correlation was not always seen. The scores were at times inconsistent, giving credence to the theory that academic grades do not always measure work readiness. This is a necessary component, in our opinion, as WSS measures variables not always measured by GPA. We assessed SCANS know-how in the first year's

work. Ideally, we would like to re-assess at the end of the second year to measure participants' growth--a significant outcome which could be used in addition to GPA to guarantee graduates. Below are some of the results:

Student	Average Success Probability	GPA
Joe	**5 out of 10**	**3.281**
Joyce	3 out of 10	2.965
Barbara	4 out of 10	3.322
Cheryl	**3 out of 10**	**3.262**
Vallie	5 out of 10	3.593
Jodie	6 out of 10	1.600
Veronica	**5 out of 10**	**1.486**

Three students from the WSS Pilot (Spring, 1994) were also students in the Zenger Miller Pilot (Spring, 1995) in Bus 255--Management and Organizational Behavior where they took the WSS for the second time at SCC. Two students improved by 40% each. One student stayed the same. The overall scores of the second group as compared to the first group were higher, possibly due to greater work experience and maturity.

Joe	7 out of 10
Cheryl	5 out of 10
Veronica	5 out of 10

The WSS program is being set up in the Career Center at SCC to give students the flexibility to assess their workplace skills.

Facts About Workplace Success Skills (WSS)

The advisement policy of the Work Readiness Pilot requires students to bring their portfolios with them to each advisement session, with updates on skills and competencies they are acquiring. WSS is SCANS based.

WSS allows the advisor to assess at a glance the student's SCANS-related skills, and it enables the advisor to counsel students to take courses (with Zenger Miller and MBTI components) to provide students with the skills and competencies employers seek. **It is a valuable tool to use in the advisement process. Why?**

Easy to administer; immediate feedback.
Assessments of skills and competencies perceived as accurate by students.
Insightful information for advisement.
Tool for possible curricula revision.
Assesses strengths and weaknesses not always apparent in the classroom setting.
Measures skills necessary for supervisory level positions.
An industry-validated SCANS-based work readiness evaluation.

Sandhills Community College has entered into a two-year contractual agreement with ESS to purchase tests for the classroom. Our goal is to test students in the fall of their second year and again at the end of their second year to measure skills and competencies mastery. In addition to being able to guarantee the technical skills of graduates, we are able to certify students in the behavioral skills sought by employers of the 21st Century.

CAREER DESIGN

Computer-literate types out to revamp their futures are turning to a widening selection of PC software designed by career consultants. Among the most popular is Career Design created by Eric Sandburg, Professor at DeVries University. We custom published a unit, "The System and You," in the Contemporary Business textbook by Harcourt Brace, 1993 (Revised, 1995). We found this topic a missing link in most textbooks. At the same time, Eric Sandburg offered his software package inclusive with the textbook.

This software is being installed in the Writing Center and the Career Center at SCC to give business students the flexibility to create their portfolios. We believe the integration of the abstract and experiential learning experiences within the SCC system are instrumental to developing constancy of purpose throughout.

In the fall, 1995, we possibly will pilot a multi-media software package that will determine students' areas of interest and will provide a personalized career design software package to help each student develop his portfolio in his business specialty area.

REVISED CURRICULA

It is our plan to survey all courses in the Business Administration program to determine the skills and competencies being taught in the program. We will also assess the strengths and weaknesses to determine how each course can be enhanced. Work readiness skills and competencies will be integrated including MBTI, Zenger Miller, and Career Design throughout the 2-year curriculum, evolving from the introduction of basic information to an advanced mastery level of understanding each of these tools.

Curricula can be revised to guarantee that students are equipped with the skills industry is demanding. Integrating Zenger Miller modules, MBTI, and Career Design into the curricula in the Business and Economics Department are revisions that are productive.

WSS can be used to measure the gap between the skills and competencies we are teaching and the skills and competencies the students need to compete in the work place of the 21st century.
We can tie our guarantee to WSS or another assessment tool by assessing students when they enter and leave SCC. There will be responsibility for both the student and SCC to create a partnership to gain these skills and competencies. **Assessment gives both groups valuable information.**

CONCLUSIONS

> **We at SCC have created an innovative process that meets the requirements at the state and federal levels for SCANS school-based learning. We have piloted programs successfully that provide learning tools and measurement tools necessary to guarantee the behavioral skills in the workplace.**

These students now know that they can eat change for breakfast, that uncertainty brings opportunities in the workplace, and that they can adapt and grow the skills and competencies they will need in the 21st Century. As facilitators, we can see the expressions change, the attitudes become more proactive, and the person become more aware of his/her capabilities. These students understand that today an educated person is no longer adequate. Today perception is more important than analysis as we concentrate on the flow of information rather than the flow of things.

Employers can look to SCC for graduates in the Business Administration program who are aware of the increasingly intangible nature of talents required in the workplace and who will continue to grow these lifelong skills through their local community college.